

Washington, DC -- On Wednesday, Congressman the House considered a continuing resolution to complete the unfinished appropriations bills left undone by the previous Congress.

“The previous congressional leadership completed only two of the eleven appropriations bills needed to fund the federal government, which left us with numerous fiscal problems for federal agencies, state governments, and localities,” noted Joe. “While we were forced to work under severe time restraints and budgetary restrictions, today we placed our fiscal house in order. And I’m pleased we managed to increase funding for veterans’ health care by \$3.6 billion for 325,000 veterans, help more than 5.3 million students pay for college through an increase in the Pell Grant, and finance the construction of 300 new or expanded health centers that will serve 1.2 million patients.”

Additionally, the 2007 Joint Funding Resolution suspends a pay raise for members of Congress until a minimum wage increase is approved in both the House and Senate and contains no earmarks, an issue that Rep. Sestak has long advocated. The resolution also contains no earmarks.

The Continuing Resolution for FY 2007 (H.J.Res. 20):

Education

- 1) Helps more than 5.3 million students pay for college through an increase in the Pell Grant by \$615.4 million.
- 2) Delivers new funding for 6,700 schools that failed to meet the standards set by No Child Left Behind by \$103.7 million.
- 3) Provided increased special education grants to better serve the 6.9 million children in America with disabilities by \$200 million.
- 4) Increases funding for Head Start to help prevent a drop in enrollments by \$103.7 million.

Healthcare

- 1) Increases funding for veterans health care by \$3.6 billion to provide health care for 325,000 veterans.
- 2) Finances the construction of 300 new or expanded health centers that will serve 1.2 million new patients by providing an increase of \$206.9 million.
- 3) Funds an additional 500 research projects through the National Institutes of Health by providing an increase of \$619.5 million.
- 4) Increases funding for Defense Health Programs for service members and their families by \$1.2 billion—includes treatment of service members wounded in action in Iraq and Afghanistan.
- 5) Increases Global HIV/AIDS funding by \$1.3 billion

Other Priorities

- 1) Fully funds 31,359 positions, including 12,213 agents, and 2,577 intelligence analysts, thereby doubling the number of intelligence analysts since 9/11 at the FBI by an increase of \$216.6 million.
- 2) Provides housing assistance for 227,000 individuals and families through a \$1.4 billion increase for Section 8 housing programs.

In Joe's first week, he voted to return to 'pay-as-you-go' government and to require transparency on earmarks [i.e., a provision included at the request of a Representative providing budget/spending authority for a locality other than through a statutory/or an administrative formula-driven or competitive award process] to finally end the abuse of special interest earmarks. Since 1996 there has been an explosion in the number of earmarks from just over 3,000 in 1996 to over 13,000 in 2006, amounting to \$29 billion in pork-barrel projects that year, according to one estimate. While I believe that earmarks do serve a purpose when they are for projects that are in the interests of the citizens of the district, Joe wants to ensure that the process is fully transparent so that Members can be held accountable to the public for their actions.

The Fiscal Year 2008 budget and appropriations process is set to begin next week.

Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in

Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever to serve in the U.S. Congress.

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